

**Notice of Availability of the
Draft Environmental Assessment for Minuteman III Modification
and
Draft Finding of No Significant Impact**

The US Air Force (USAF) is proposing modifications to the Minuteman (MM) III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile system to help ensure its long-term safety and reliability. A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) of these modifications has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and implementing regulations. The EA analyzes the environmental impacts of (1) MM III missile flight tests using modified Reentry System (RS) hardware/software, in addition to continuing ongoing flight tests; (2) deployment of new and modified RS hardware/software on fielded MM III missiles; and (3) deployment of new command and control console equipment at MM III Launch Control Centers (LCCs).

All MM III missile flight tests would be conducted at Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB), CA, using existing launch facilities. The MM boosters used in the tests would come from operational Launch Facilities (LFs) at the MM Wings (i.e., FE Warren AFB, WY; Malmstrom AFB, MT; and Minot AFB, ND). Replacement rocket motors would be supplied by the depot facility at Hill AFB, UT. In addition to the ongoing three to four MM III flight tests conducted every year at Vandenberg, two additional flight tests per year would occur in Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006. At the terminal end of each missile flight, the Reentry Vehicle (RV) simulators would impact near the US Army Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands, in either the open ocean, the atoll lagoon, or the vicinity of Illeginni Island. Beginning in 2006, RS modification kits would be installed on the MM III missiles at each LF within the three Wings. During this process, existing Mark 21 RVs would be deployed on select missiles, in addition to removal of the older Mark 12 RVs. Related personnel trainer/support equipment would also be deployed at the Wing support bases and at other locations. Lastly, at all of the MM III LCCs within the three Wings and at other trainer/support locations, new command and control console equipment would replace older equipment.

Based on this analysis, the USAF has determined that the proposed activities are not expected to result in any significant impacts to the environment. Beginning on September 2, 2004, the Draft EA and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be available to the public for a 30-day review period. Both documents are available over the Internet at <http://ax.losangeles.af.mil/axf> (under "announcements"), and at the locations on the attached list. **Comments on the Draft EA/Draft FONSI will be accepted through October 1, 2004.** Submit written comments to: SMC/AXFV, Attn: Leonard Aragon, 2420 Vela Way, Suite 1467, El Segundo, CA 90245-4659. Comments may also be submitted via facsimile at (310) 363-1503, or by e-mail at Leonard.Aragon@losangeles.af.mil.

Locations to view the Draft EA and Draft FONSI

California

- Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106-9010
- Lompoc Public Library, 501 East North Avenue, Lompoc, CA 93436
- Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 East Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
- Santa Maria Public Library, 420 South Broadway, Santa Maria, CA 93454

Colorado

- Farr Branch Library, 1939 61st Avenue, Greeley, CO 80634
- Sterling Public Library, 421 North 4th Street, Sterling, CO 80751

Montana

- Great Falls Public Library, 301 Second Avenue North, Great Falls, MT 59401
- Glacier County Public Library, 21 1st Avenue SE, Cut Bank, MT 59427
- Havre-Hill County Library, 402 Third Street, Havre, MT 59501
- Lewistown Public Library, 701 W. Main Street, Lewistown, MT 59457

Nebraska

- Kimball Public Library, 208 S. Walnut Street, Kimball, NE 69145
- Sidney Public Library, 1112 12th Avenue, Sidney, NE 69162

North Dakota

- Gordon B. Olson Library, Minot State University, 500 University Avenue West, Minot, ND 58707
- Minot Public Library, 516 2nd Avenue SW, Minot, ND 58701

Utah

- Contact Kay Winn, NEPA Program Manager for Hill AFB, at (801) 777-0383, or go to <http://em.hill.af.mil/conservation/NEPA/index.asp> on the Internet.

Wyoming

- Burns Branch Library, 112 Main Street, Burns, WY 82053
- Goshen County Library, 2001 East A Street, Torrington, WY 82240
- Laramie County Library, 2800 Central Avenue, Cheyenne, WY 82001
- Pine Bluffs Branch Library, 110 E. 2nd Street, Pine Bluffs, WY 82082

Republic of the Marshall Islands

- Alele Museum, Library, and National Archives, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands 96960
- Grace Sherwood Library, US Army Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Roi-Namur Library, US Army Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands